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ABSTRACT

Materials and directions for classroom simulation of the formulation and upkeep of a typical French family's budget are presented. The game is intended for intermediate and advanced students of French and adaptable for various class sizes. It is a communicative game, designed to provide an enjoyable atmosphere for true-to-life information exchange and to promote active interaction among students. The game involves dividing students into groups of three, each of the three assuming a family member's character (father, mother, and student son). Extra students are assigned as banker and/or another family member. The group goal is for the family budget to come out "in the black," and the goal for each player is to become the most influential family member in this process. Part 1 of the game consists of making the budget, and part 2 involves recording progress. The materials include a budget sheet, situation cards telling of events occurring during the budget month that require family decision-making, chance cards giving good or bad news, a checkbook, cards describing the family members, a playing board, and notes on writing checks and using housing ads. (MSE)

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LE JEU DU BUDGET
(The Budget Game)

Promoting Functional Language Use Through a Simulation Game

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In hopes of stimulating student motivation in the foreign language classroom, many educators have been exploring the possibility of using games. Upon examining the foreign language games available on the market today, one finds that the vast majority of them merely manipulate grammatical forms in a more palatable form than one might find in the text. In view of the stress on real communication in the classroom, it is both surprising and rather unfortunate that so few games stress a functional, communicative use of the foreign language. Students today are expressing an eagerness to try out their language skills through activities that deal with real-life situations and "real" language. Communicative games can be one way to sharpen these skills, and at the same time provide a stimulating, motivational tool for classroom use. Games of this type could conceivably be created to practice almost any function in the foreign language.

Le Jeu du Budget was created in an attempt to increase the collection of true "communicative" games now available. It is well suited for intermediate and advanced language students and may be easily adapted for classes of various sizes. *Le Jeu du Budget* is based upon the formulation and upkeep of a typical French family's budget. This particular game has been developed to provide an enjoyable atmosphere for true information-getting and sharing, and to promote active interaction among students while they practice the real-life skills of convincing, persuading, and compromising.

STRUCTURE OF THE GAME: The students are divided into groups of three. Each group represents the LeClerc family, one student assuming the role of Monsieur LeClerc, one of Madame LeClerc, and the third, their son, Georges LeClerc. For differing class sizes, extra students can be assigned roles as follows:

- the Banker: in charge of collecting checks from each family, making sure that they are correctly filled out, etc.

OR

- another Family Member. Too young to have the responsibility of actually spending money (thus does not play on board), but participates in all family discussions and decisions, siding with whomever he/she pleases on controversial matters.

OR

- form a two-member Family. Play as usual.

OBJECT OF THE GAME: The *group goal* for the family is to come out with the family budget "in the black" (*avec un solde positif*). The *individual goal* for each player is to be the most influential member of the family, by earning the most personal points during the game.

MATERIALS: Each family will receive 3 Family Cards describing family member roles, 3 Budget Sheets for recording all budget information, 3 *Immobilier* Sheets for the housing choice, 1 Playing Board, 1 *Carnet de Chèques* for writing checks to cover expenses, 1 Die to determine player moves, 13 Situation Cards containing the monthly budget conflicts, and 14 Chance Cards containing news that affects the budget, either in a positive or negative way.

DIRECTIONS: How to play Part I: *Faites le Budget*

(1) Divide the class into groups of three. Hand out the Family Cards. One of the three will assume the role of Monsieur LeClerc, one will be Madame LeClerc, and the third, Georges LeClerc.

(2) Have each student scan the Family Card to discover how much money he/she earns, if any, and to determine what type of personality and preferences he/she has.

(3) Distribute the Budget Sheets. To begin the play, each family member should explain in French how much money he/she has to contribute to the budget per month. Students should fill out the top part of the Budget Sheet (*Ressources*) together (3-5 min.).

(4) Distribute the Housing Choices Sheet (*L'Immobilier*). Family members should discuss their prefrences for housing, being sure to consider their individual personality characteristics when presenting their arguments (3-5 min.). Once the decision is reached, have the students enter the appropriate budget information on their Budget Sheets.

(5) Next, the family should determine the remaining budget allocations, again considering personal likes and dislilkes described on their Family Cards. (For example, Monsieur LeClerc will want to budget most of the money for necessities [*nourriture, assurances*, etc.] since he hates to waste money, whereas Madame LeClerc will want to have more money budgeted for clothing. Georges will want all of his money to go into the miscellaneous area, so that he can go to all the Westerns at the movies.) (2 min.)

DIRECTIONS: How to play Part II: *Enregistrez Vos Progrès*

(1) Hand out a Playing Board, a *Carnet de Chèques*, Die and both Situation and Chance Cards to each group. Have students create markers to stand for their character on the Playing Board (Coins would work).

(2) The game proceeds with players rolling the die to see how many spaces to move their markers. A player landing on a space marked

must pick a Situation Card. A player landing on a space marked

must pick a Chance Card. (If both marks are designated, the player must choose both a Situation and a Chance Card.) A player landing on an unmarked space simply passes.

(3) The game is finished when each family member reaches the end of the board – the end of the month. The family must then add and subtract all of their expenses registered on their Budget Sheets (double checking figures with their check stubs – *les souches*). They will thus discover if they kept their expenses within their budget and end up with a positive balance (*un solde positif*). The family wins the game if they do indeed have a positive balance. Individual winners can also be determined by adding up each player's personal points. The family member with the most personal points wins.

SITUATION CARDS: Situation Cards tell of events taking place during the budgeted month that require decision-making on the part of every family member. The student choosing the card must explain the situation in French to the rest of the family and proceed to persuade them according to his/her preference. Tell students to limit their discussions to no more than three minutes. A sample Situation Card might read, "Convince your family to go to the movie of your choice. *If you succeed, you earn 1 personal point.*" This card will also tell how the decision affects the family budget. To keep track of the various things that affect the budget, students should use *Enregistrez Vos Progrès* located on the Budget Sheet. A plus sign (+) would indicate a gain (*bénéfice*) on the budget, and a minus

sign (–) would indicate a loss (*perte*). IMPORTANT! *All italicized information on a Situation Card is to be kept secret until the family has reached a decision on the item.*

CHANCE CARDS: A Chance Card is either good news or bad news, and each deals directly with the family's budget, either in a positive way or a negative way. A sample Chance Card might read, "Explain to your family that you just won a big sweepstakes worth 800 francs!" The family may at that point add 800 francs to the appropriate budget area, indicated on the card. The student choosing the card must explain the situation in French to the rest of the family. Each family member should keep track of gains and losses on his/her own Budget Sheet.

LE CARNET DE CHÈQUES: The family members should write checks in French for all appropriate items, such as purchases. This provides an additional place to keep track of expenses.

Le Jeu du Budget has been designed for intermediate and advanced classes; therefore, prior to the playing of the Budget Game, the following grammatical features and vocabulary items should have been introduced:

The Imperative	*Allons voir ce film ce soir.*
Comparatives and Superlatives	*L'appartement en ville est moins cher que la maison à la campagne.*
The Subjunctive	*Il faut que nous achetions cette voiture de sport.*
Conditional Sentences	*Si nous dépensions trop d'argent, nous dépasserons notre budget.*

Budget Vocabulary:

Verbs: *dépasser, dépenser, économiser, gagner, louer, coûter*

Nouns: *l'argent, l'argent de poche, un chèque, un carnet de chèques, le logement, un prix, les spectacles, les transports, les vêtements, une dépense, les distractions, une économie, la nourriture*

Adjectives: *bon marché, cher (chère), gratuit, meublé*

Interrogative Expressions: *Combien...?*

The following cultural materials are also suggested for pre-teaching since the game involves both reading classified ads in a French newspaper and writing checks in French.

READING THE CLASSIFIED ADS IN A FRENCH NEWSPAPER:

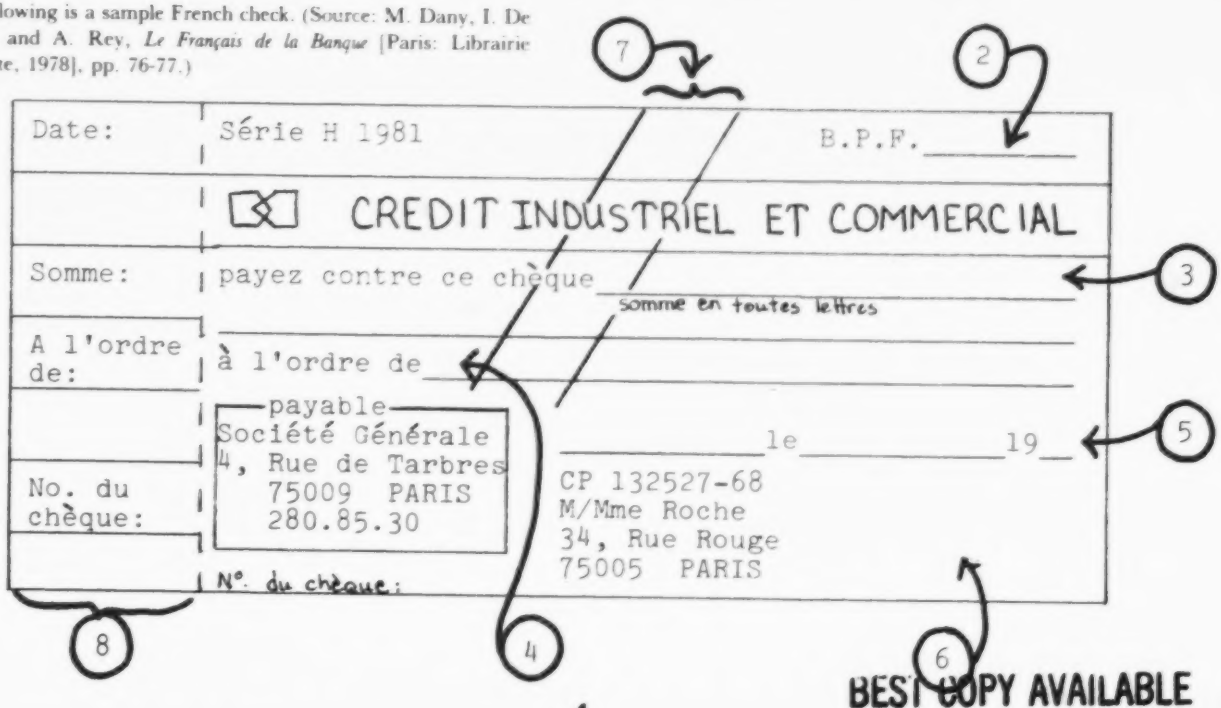
Some useful abbreviations often found in *L'Immobilier* include:

tt. cft.	tout confort
bains, s.b.	salle de bains
chbre.	chambre
asc.	ascenseur
cuis.	cuisine
cuis. équip.	cuisine équipée
s/sol	sous-sol
4e étage	quatrième étage
bel imm.	bel immeuble
séj.	salle de séjour

WRITING CHECKS IN FRENCH:

(1) Utilisez toujours un stylo à bille avec de l'encre indélébile.
(2) Inscrivez la somme in chiffres après les lettres "B.P.F."
(3) Inscrivez la somme en toutes lettres ou le chèque l'indique.
(4) Indiquez le nom du bénéficiare; A l'ordre de...
(5) Datez le chèque correctement (ville, jour et mois, an).
(6) Signez toujours vos chèques de la même façon pour lutter contre le vol.
(7) Barrez votre chèque de 2 traits parallèles (pour vous protéger contre les risques de perte ou de vol) si le bénéficiare désire faire présenter le chèque par une banque. Le chèque ne peut être payé qu'à un banquier.
(8) Remplissez la souche soigneusement si votre mémoire n'est pas toujours fidèle.

The following is a sample French check. (Source: M. Dany, I. De Renty, and A. Rey, *Le Français de la Banque* [Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1978], pp. 76-77.)



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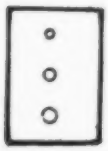
PLAYING BOARD

"Le Jeu du Budget"

lundi	mardi	mercredi	jeudi	vendredi	samedi	dimanche
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



Choisissez une carte de Situation

Choisissez une carte de Chance

APPENDIX OF GAME MATERIALS

FAMILY CARDS

Georges LeClerc

Profession:	Etudiant	
Salaire:	25 francs par semaine (argent de poche)	
Personnalité:	Il se concerne surtout avec les dépenses diverses parce qu'il aime aller au cinéma tout le temps. Il aime aussi beaucoup manger!	
Préférences:	*Il aime:*	*Il déteste:*
	les "Westerns"	manger aux restaurants chinois
	le pain, le lait	le poulet
	manger à McDonalds	les chats
	la viande	les choses bleues
	les sports d'hiver	
	les choses rouges	
	les chiens	
	marcher ou aller à bicyclette	

Madame LeClerc

Profession:	Ménagère	
Salaire:	Elle n'en a pas	
Personnalité:	Elle a tendance à gaspiller l'argent. Elle aime beaucoup, par exemple, acheter des vêtements chers.	
Préférences:	*Elle aime:*	*Elle déteste:*
	dîner aux restaurants chinois	le vin
	le confort à la maison	les choses rouges
	les choses vertes	les chiens
	les voitures de sport	le bifteck
	les comédies	le transport public
	les oiseaux	
	le bifteck	

Monsieur LeClerc

Profession:	Professeur de biologie	
Salaire:	75,000 francs par an	
Personnalité:	Il n'aime pas gaspiller son argent. Il n'achète rien qui n'est pas absolument nécessaire!	
Préférences:	*Il aime:*	*Il déteste:*
	le vin rouge	manger à McDonalds
	dîner aux restaurants français	les maisons climatisées
	la nature (faire du camping, etc.)	les choses vertes
	les films d'amour	les oiseaux
	les chats	
	le transport public	
	le poulet	

BUDGET SHEET

Le Budget des LeClerc

Reasources (pour un mois)

Monsieur LeClerc: _____ francs
Madame LeClerc: _____ francs
Georges LeClerc: _____ francs
TOTAL _____ francs

Enrégistrez vos Progrès ici:

Dépenses

Logement _____ francs
Nourriture _____ francs
Vêtements _____ francs
Assurances
(minimum 1000 F) _____ francs
Gaz/Electricité _____ francs
Transports _____ francs
Dépenses Diverses _____ francs
TOTAL: _____ francs
Economies? _____ francs

\+ = Bénéfices
– = Pertes

A la fin du mois les LeClerc ont dépensé _____ francs.
Avez-vous un solde positif ou un solde négatif?

Points Personnels
Monsieur LeClerc
Madame LeClerc
Georges LeClerc

QUI A GAGNÉ? _____

CHOIX DE LOGEMENT

L'immobilier

Appartement Vente
MEUBLE

Residentiel, très bel imm., 4e ét. sur rue, asc., cuis. équip., w.c. 2 bains, tapis, tt. conft., 4 chbres. A saisir. 2125F/mois. Gaz/électr. 375F/mois. Transports 175F/mois. Voir pptaire mardi, mercredi de 14 à 19h. 1, rue de la Paix.

Maison
NON MEUBLEE

Neuilly

A retaper. 3 chbres., gde. cuis., bains, sans conft., bon quartier. Prix justifié – 750F/mois. Gaz/électr. 1000F/mois. Transports 800F/mois. Tél: 873-23-55, même le soir. Très mauvais état à louer tel quel.

Maison de
Campagne

Proximité autoroute. séj., salon, bains, 2 chbres., cuis., s/sol. vue sur mer. Meublée. Jardin. Prix 1250F/mois. Gaz/électricité 500F/ Transports 875F/mois. Tél: 222-99-71, à partir de 20 h.

Date _____
_____19_____
Somme _____
_____
_____
A l'ordre de _____
_____
_____
No. du chèque _____

SERIE M 1981 B.P.F. _____

CRÉDIT INDUSTRIEL ET COMMERCIAL 17

payer contre ce chèque _____
somme en toutes lettres
_____
à l'ordre de _____

PAYABLE
Succursale CP - 841
1 Rue de la Mouette
75009 PARIS

No. du chèque

_____ le _____ 19_____

CP 1378-89
M. et/ou Mme LeClerc
3 Rue de la Paix
75019 PARIS

Date _____
_____19_____
Somme _____
_____
_____
A l'ordre de _____
_____
_____
No. du chèque _____

SERIE M 1981 B.P.F. _____

CRÉDIT INDUSTRIEL ET COMMERCIAL 17

payer contre ce chèque _____
somme en toutes lettres
_____
à l'ordre de _____

PAYABLE
Succursale CP - 841
1 Rue de la Mouette
75009 PARIS

No. du chèque

_____ le _____ 19_____

CP 1378-89
M. et/ou Mme LeClerc
3 Rue de la Paix
75019 PARIS

Date _____
_____19_____
Somme _____
_____
_____
A l'ordre de _____
_____
_____
No. du chèque _____

SERIE M 1981 B.P.F. _____

CRÉDIT INDUSTRIEL ET COMMERCIAL 17

payer contre ce chèque _____
somme en toutes lettres
_____
à l'ordre de _____

PAYABLE
Succursale CP - 841
1 Rue de la Mouette
75009 PARIS

No. du chèque

_____ le _____ 19_____

CP 1378-89
M. et/ou Mme LeClerc
3 Rue de la Paix
75019 PARIS

Explain to your family that oil has been discovered on your country property. You gain 850 francs for your Miscellaneous budget.

Explain that you finally sold your record collection. Gain 150 francs for your miscellaneous budget.

Explain that your television just broke down. To have it fixed right away costs you 160 francs from your Miscellaneous funds.

Explain that a tornado hit your house during a storm. You must pay 250 francs in damages from your Miscellaneous funds.

Explain that you won the big sweepstakes (*la loterie nationale*). Gain 850 francs for your Miscellaneous funds.

Explain to your family that you wrecked the car. To get it fixed puts you 100 francs over your *transports* budget.

Explain that you've agreed to keep the neighbours' dogs while they're away on vacation. Gain 120 francs for doing this. Add to your Miscellaneous budget.

Explain that you returned a rich woman's cat to her. She rewards you. Gain 85 francs for your Miscellaneous funds.

Explain that the entire family got the flu (*la grippe*) and must go to the doctor for shots. These cost you 80 francs from your Meiscellaneous funds.

Explain that your summer home was robbed. You must pay 125 francs to retrieve a lost item.

Explain that your great uncle died and left you an antique armoire. You sell it for 750 francs. Gain that amount in miscellaneous area.

Explain to your family that you found a 100 franc note today. Gain 100 francs for your miscellaneous funds.

Explain to your family that the *rent* just went up. You're going to go over your *logement* budget by 40 francs this month.

Explain that the family pet is sick. You must take him to the vet. This costs you 75 francs.

Your family is going to the movies tonight. Decide on which film. Here are the choices: John Wayne film: *15 francs/personne*, "La Cage aux Folles." *15 francs/personne*, "Je T'Aime." *17 francs/personne*.

If you convince them to go to your favorite kind of film, gain 1 personal point. This decision does not otherwise affect budget.

Convince your family to sell one of your two cars to save energy.

If you convince them, gain 1 personal point. Also, you will end up 100 francs under your assurances budget figure.

Convince your family to purchase a large air conditioner for the house.

If you do, gain 2 personal points. This also makes you go 75 francs over your electric budget.

You suddenly feel your family needs more life insurance. Convince them to buy some more.

If you do, gain 2 personal points and go over assurances budget by 50 francs.

A l'épicerie: You must buy 3 of these 5 items. Decide among yourselves what you will buy:
bread, eggs, meat, milk, wine

If you convince them to buy wine as one of the three items, earn 1 personal point. This decision does not otherwise affect budget.

Your family has decided to buy a pet. Choose among these: chien – *80 francs*; chat – *gratuit*; oiseau – *125 francs*.

If you convince them to buy your favorite pet, earn 1 personal point. Does not affect budget.

Au restaurant: Your family is going out to dinner tonight. Which restaurant? Here are your choices: un restaurant chinois, McDonalds, un restaurant français.

If you convince them to go to your favorite place, earn 1 personal point. If you choose the French restaurant you go 50 francs over your Miscellaneous budget.

Au magasin: The family must buy a new couch. These are the color choices: rouge – *250 francs*; bleu – *350 francs*; vert – *450 francs*.

If you convince them to buy your favorite color, earn 1 personal point. If you convince them to buy the green couch, you go over Miscellaneous budget by 25 francs.

Convince your family to take the bus to work or school today instead of driving the car or walking.

If you do you'll be 25 francs under your transports budget figure AND you will gain 1 personal point.

Au magasin de vêtements: Convince your family to let you purchase a new winter coat you really want.

All must agree to let you purchase it, then you gain 1 personal point. This decision does not otherwise affect budget.

It's your birthday and your family forgot it completely!

If you can get one of them to realize it's your birthday by means of gestures alone (no speaking) within two minutes, gain 2 personal points.

Your family must buy a new car. Tell them that these are their choices and the first monthly payment:
Deux Chevaux – *250 francs*; Porsche – *500 francs*

If you convince them to buy the cheaper car, gain 1 personal point. If they choose the Deux Chevaux you'll be 250 francs under your assurances budget figure, the Porsche, 250 francs over.

The family has planned a party tonight. Here are your serving choices:
la viande hachée, le bifteck, le poulet

If you convince them to have your favorite meat, earn 1 personal point. If they choose bifteck you go over your nourriture budget by 30 francs.